



## RAW (UNPASTEURIZED) MILK CONSUMPTION

### Is it legal to sell raw milk for human consumption?

Federal regulation prohibits the introduction into interstate commerce of any unpasteurized milk product in final package form and intended for human consumption (21 CFR 1240.61). Although some states do permit the intrastate (within state boundaries) sale of raw milk, Delaware does not allow the sale or offer of unpasteurized milk or milk products.

### How does pasteurization of raw milk protect consumers?

Pasteurization is a process that kills harmful bacteria by heating milk to a specific temperature for a set period of time. Although some spoilage organisms may still be present, the pasteurization process kills the types of bacteria that may cause disease.

### Why is it unsafe to consume raw milk?

- Raw milk, no matter how carefully produced, may be unsafe. Raw milk may contain many pathogens, including *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Campylobacter jejuni*, *Salmonella* species, *E. coli*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and *bovis*, *Brucella* species, *Coxiella Burnetii* and *Yersinia enterocolitica*. Illnesses caused by these bacteria can cause special problems for the very young, the elderly, and the immunocompromised. Infection with *E. coli* O157:H7 can cause hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS) and possibly result in acute renal failure.
- Raw milk does not kill disease-causing bacteria. Instead, raw milk potentially harbors a wide range of dangerous pathogens that can cause illness.
- Raw milk does not cure illnesses or allergies.

### Have any illnesses or deaths been caused by consuming raw milk products?

Unpasteurized milk and cheese were implicated in 45 outbreaks of foodborne illness between 1998 and 2005, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). These outbreaks accounted for 1,007 illnesses, including two deaths and 104 hospitalizations. The actual number of illnesses is almost certainly higher, but not all cases are reported.

### What are the symptoms of illnesses caused by consuming raw milk?

Consuming raw milk may cause vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, fever, headache and body ache. Most people will recover from illnesses caused by bacteria in raw milk; however, some individuals can develop chronic, severe or life-threatening symptoms.

### What are the other effects of pasteurization on raw milk?

- Nutrients: There is no significant difference between the nutrient content of pasteurized and unpasteurized milk.
- Allergies: There is no difference in the milk proteins present in both raw milk and pasteurized milk that cause allergic reactions in dairy-sensitive individuals.
- Lactose intolerance: Pasteurization does not lead to lactose intolerance, which is due to some individuals' bodies not producing the enzyme needed to break down lactose. Pasteurization does not affect the lactose concentration in milk.